



Small Grants recipient Paul Miliotis (net in hand) scouts for dragonflies with Chapter Chairman Alex Gardner (center) and Linc Foster, Beeslick Preserve Stewardship Committee member.

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SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Paul Miliotis checks out nocturnal dragonflies by listening in the dark and swinging his net at the noise. If you think that's far-fetched, you won't for long. Miliotis understands a given species' psychology, knows how to anticipate the dragonfly's movement (when and where to swing the net), and why. Some dragonflies are patrolling, others resting idle. Miliotis rarely misses his shot, and once he has the insect in hand, he can tell you a great deal about the creature. Miliotis is involved in one of eight studies fully or partially funded by the Connecticut Chapter this summer. He is looking for rare or endangered dragonflies and, thus far, has discovered two genera and one species heretofore not recorded in Connecticut.

The Small Grants Program encourages scientific research on lands protected by the Conservancy in Connecticut and enables us to understand and better manage our lands. In February, we distributed a list of top priority topics for study to colleges and universities in Connecticut and solicited research proposals from interested individuals. The response was immediate, and in short order the Chapter's Scientific Advisory Committee was reviewing more than a dozen proposals for study—requests for grants that ranged from \$500 to \$1,500. The

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY AT WORK

	Nationally	In Connecticut
Total projects	3,119	298
Total acres saved	2,006,934	13,726
Members	157,478	5,778
Corporate Associates	398	23

From the Land

SUMMER/1983

Published for the members of
the Connecticut Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

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committee judged each proposal for its scientific merit, the qualifications of the investigator, the study's contribution to Conservancy goals and objectives, and its application for management.

Some of the small grant studies supplement the work of the student interns. The lower Connecticut River is being scrutinized by several investigators this summer. Professor Marge Holland and her student, Meg MacConnell from the College of New Rochelle in New York, are studying the impact of tidal fluctuations and salinity gradients there, comparing the biotic community structure at Lord's Cove Preserve in Lyme to that across the river at Great Meadow in Essex.

Nels Barrett, a graduate student at UConn at Storrs, is also looking at the influence of tidal fluctuations on the wetland vegetation at Chapman's Pond, Lord's Cove and other sites, while Chuck Katuska, a student intern from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, is completing a natural resources inventory of our Cynthia B. Carlson Nature Preserve at Chapman's Pond—uplands as well as wetlands.

Each investigator coordinates his and her work with the others, and together they unravel the principles that

influence the distribution of vegetation in the lower Connecticut River Valley. Once we learn what special species occur on our preserves, and what their requirements are, we will be well-armed to make sensible management decisions.

At the mouth of the Connecticut another study is just getting underway. Professor Drew Carey and graduate student Paul Gruntmeyer of Wesleyan University are surveying the geomorphology of Griswold Point Preserve and inventorying the aquatic life of the salt marsh and mudflats occurring in the lee of the mile-long sand spit. Completing the work force at Griswold Point is Jeff Downing, warden there and at Pattagansett Marshes.

Menunketesuck Island, an important potential acquisition listed in the Connecticut Critical Areas Program (ConnCAP), is also a focal point for student intern Julie Zickefoose who, helped by volunteer Andrew Griswold, patrols all six Least Tern/Piping Plover nesting sites along



Jeff Downing, warden, and Julie Zickefoose, intern.

the Connecticut shoreline. Since mid-May Zickefoose and Griswold have posted and patrolled these fragile areas, which stretch from Stratford to Old Lyme. Menunketesuck in Westbrook hosts the state's largest Least Tern colony with well over 100 nesting pairs.

The information about the occurrences of rare and endangered plant and animal species that is generated this summer will be forwarded to the Natural Resources Center of the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). This information will become part of the Connecticut Natural Diversity Data Base, a new joint project of DEP and the Conservancy, supported in part by the National Audubon Society.

The Small Grants Program has a budget just under \$8,000 and greatly increases our ability to gather quantitative "hard" facts about Connecticut's natural diversity. These data become the base for our management plans and for the budgets that drive the action of wise stewardship. Please consider financially supporting this new effort, either earmarking your tax-deductible contribution to The Nature Conservancy for ConnCAP-Science or Small Grants Program.

Thank you,

Susan D. Cooley

Susan D. Cooley
Associate Director

BLUFF HEAD FOSSILS AT YALE

Deep within the Peabody Museum at Yale, Nicholas McDonald is getting his second look at the large slab of shale he excavated from the Conservancy's Bluff Head Preserve over a year ago. McDonald was awarded a grant through our Small Grants Program to continue what for him is an abiding interest in the paleontology of the Triassic-Jurassic rock, laid down as silt sediments in a vast lake some 190 million years ago.

McDonald has spent over 10 years excavating, collecting, and studying fossils from various localities in the Connecticut Valley and has published scientific reports on these sites. The Bluff Head shale is prized for the numbers of fossil fishes it contains and for the quality of their preservation. The most significant result of the research at Bluff Head has been the reassignment of the age of the Connecticut Valley rocks, based on pollen, spore and fish data from the site. McDonald's study of the rock strata should reveal valuable information about the ancient lake's paleoecology as well as raise more questions and stimulate further research.

RESEARCH AT BURNHAM BROOK AND PATTAGANSETT MARSHES

Nanette Brodeur, a student at Connecticut College and recipient of our Small Grants Program, is back for a second summer at Pattagansett Marshes Preserve in Niantic, this time to take a close look at the widgeon grass beds that occupy very shallow waters and are exposed at low tide. Brodeur will document the community that lives in and around the widgeon grass and will study the productivity of the grass. She hopes to determine whether the density of the vegetation affects the number of species and individuals associated with the grass, and will compare this community to that associated with eelgrass in the deeper water at Pattagansett Marshes.

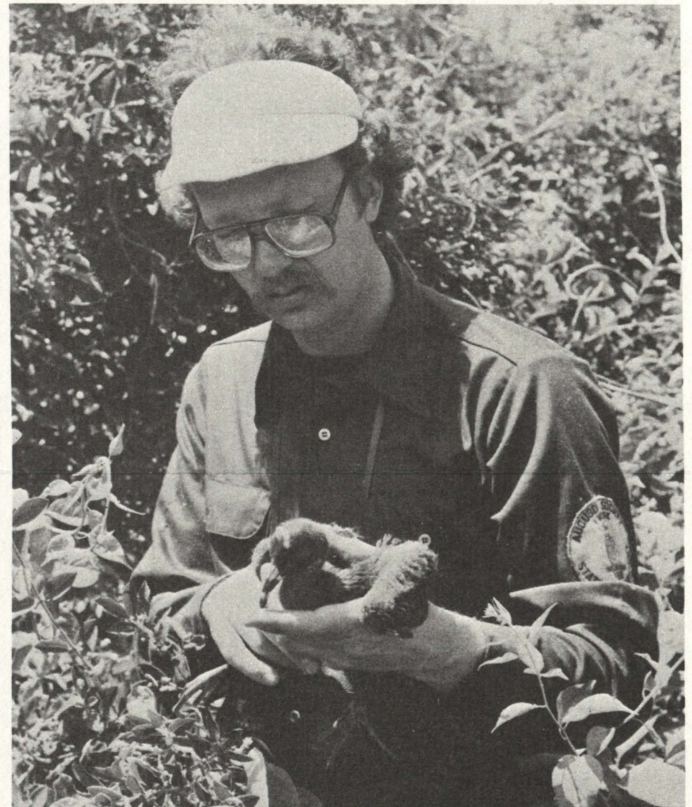
Deborah Lee, a graduate student at UConn at Storrs, has been awarded funding through our Small Grant Program to survey the aquatic insect fauna of Burnham Brook and Strong's Brook at the Burnham Brook Preserve in East Haddam. Until now very little research, if any, has been published on macroinvertebrates in small, unpolluted streams in Connecticut—streams which make up an estimated 85% of the total length of river drainages. Lee will collect aquatic insects and identify whatever other large invertebrates occur in her collections. She will determine the distribution, seasonal abundance, and character of these creatures and will record basic physical data on the two streams' temperature, discharge, pH, etc.

The studies of both Lee and Brodeur add to our understanding of each preserve. With increased knowledge gained over the years, we are better equipped to manage our lands specifically for the special species and/or special communities harbored in the nature preserve.

CHIMON ISLAND'S BIRDLIFE

For the third year Milan Bull, Director of the Connecticut Audubon Society's Natural History Services in Fairfield, is supervising a study with Peter Marra to document and quantify Chimon Island's ecological significance as the only major nesting colony of herons, egrets, and ibises in Long Island Sound. Bull and Marra are being financed, in part, through the Small Grants Program.

These investigators have censused the island and mapped the distribution of nesting herons and egrets by species. They find that the birds choose specific elevations at which to nest. The nests are stratified, by species, in the thick tangle of vines that shroud the stunted



Small Grants recipient Milan Bull bands a young glossy ibis as part of his joint study with Peter Marra to document the bird life of Chimon Island, a potential Conservancy acquisition.

vegetation of the island. They are also inventorying the plant species used as nest sites to determine successional stages of this flora, as well as investigating these birds' vast feeding territories along the Long Island and Connecticut shorelines.

Through their research, we know that Chimon currently hosts the largest heron colony in New England with over 500 nesting pairs, comprising eight species. For this reason Chimon Island has been at the top of the Connecticut Chapter's "want list" for years. Through the renewed effort of the Connecticut Critical Areas Program (ConnCAP), we hope to secure the protection of Chimon. If we do, we will be in a good position, thanks to the Bull and Marra study, to plan public access to the island that won't interfere with the nesting birds.



Top Photo: Student Intern Cara Lee, State Rare and Endangered Species Biologist Les Mehrhoff, and Naturalist Joe Pratt plan field research at Onion Mt. Bottom Photo: Cara Lee inventorying trap rock ridges of Connecticut.

SPECIAL FINDINGS IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Robert Craig, well known for his and Joe Dowhan's 1976 publication, *Rare and Endangered Species of Connecticut and Their Habitats*, is hard at work relocating extant populations of rare and endangered species which are known historically to occur in Fairfield County. His findings will be reported to Nancy Murray at the Connecticut Natural Diversity Data Base in Hartford, along with information coming from all the other student interns and small grant recipients. Little by little, the Chapter and the State DEP are amassing a wealth of information, readily retrievable and useful in protecting natural diversity.



Meg MacConnell, Small Grants recipient, tests the water salinity in Lord's Cove Preserve, Lyme.

TRAP ROCK RIDGE RESEARCH

Through the Student Internship Program, we are now reaching beyond our own boundaries and taking a critical look at the threatened natural communities of Connecticut, such as sand plains, calcareous wetlands, and now, trap rock ridges.

Cara Lee, graduate student at Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, was chosen to inventory the Conservancy's most recent acquisition, Onion Mountain Preserve, a trap rock ridge in Canton, and to analyze the full complement of Connecticut's trap rock ridges. These erosion-resistant basaltic ridges stretch the length of the state, flanking the Central Valley and rise several hundred feet above the lowlands. Their flat-topped summits, sheer cliffs, and talus slopes support an array of special plants which Cara is currently documenting.

Her work, like Ann Pesiri's research on sand plains last year, will likely lead to publication under the auspices of the Natural Resources Center of the State's Department of Environmental Protection and in cooperation with the Conservancy and Yale.



Stewardship Committee members Allen Mali, Nancy Phelps Blum, and Barbara Billings admire a dragonfly "in hand."

DOCUMENTING CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Janet Bechtel has been busily pulling together the work done last summer by Jeanne Anderson and Robin Fry to document the Chapter's 44 easements. Deep in the woods along the Bantam River in Litchfield, miles from anywhere, Janet keeps up her good humor—even as the thermometer hits 90°F. She is taking the final photographs to show corner boundaries of the land the Conservancy protects from further development. Photostations are indicated on separate maps and included with survey maps, topographic maps, aerial photos, conservation easement language and a complete description of the restricted area. Once completed, the document will be signed by donors and Conservancy officials and notarized as a fair representation of the land under easement for which we have legal responsibility.

1983 ANNUAL MEETING

On a spectacular June 25th, 50 members and officials of the Connecticut Chapter of TNC gathered on the beautiful grounds of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven for the Chapter's 23rd annual meeting. Chapter Chairman Alex Gardner welcomed the assemblage and opened the business meeting.

Board Members, Officers Elected

Ann Elliman of Greenwich, former National Conservation Chairman of the Garden Club of America and member of the Greenwich Land Trust, was elected to the Board of Trustees. Re-elected to his second three-year term was Dr. Thomas Siccama of New Haven. Chairman Gardner noted that Martha Briscoe was leaving the Board and expressed gratitude for her valuable counsel and steadfast support over the years of her term.

Re-elected as officers were Alex Gardner, Chairman; Peter Neill, Vice Chairman; John Blum, Treasurer; and Peter Cooper, Secretary.

Highlights of the Chapter's program in 1982 were reported by Rufus Barringer (finances), Peter Cooper (land acquisition), and Susan Cooley (stewardship).

Awards

White Oak Awards, given annually by the Connecticut Chapter to volunteers who have made outstanding personal contributions to the furtherance of the Conservancy's goals, were presented by Peter Neill to James C. Bechtel and Joe D. Pratt. Bechtel, a professional advertising consultant, graciously volunteered long hours to revamp the Chapter's brochure. Pratt, an expert naturalist and Director of West Hartford's Westmoor Park, has long and ably served on the Chapter's Stewardship Committee.



Chapter Chairman Alex Gardner presents State Biologist Les Mehrhoff with Certificate of Special Recognition.

A *Certificate of Special Recognition* was presented to Leslie J. Mehrhoff, State Rare and Endangered Species Biologist, for his valued participation on the Chapter's Science and Stewardship Committees, his leadership in conceiving and establishing the Connecticut Natural Diversity Data Base, and his tireless efforts to protect Connecticut's endangered species. In absentia Certificates were also awarded to John Blum, Chapter Treasurer; the

Andrew Gagarin family for their generous donation of Prospect Mt.; Marvin Stocking for his bargain sale gift of Onion Mt.; and to Dr. Hugo Thomas for his support of the Natural Diversity Data Base.

Speakers, Slide Presentation

The morning meeting concluded with speeches by Dennis Wolkoff, Director of TNC's Eastern Regional Office, and by Leslie J. Mehrhoff, State Biologist. Les entertained and "raised the consciousness" of everyone present with his magnificent slide collection and lively commentary on the state's rare plants and animals.



Hike at Sleeping Giant State Park

Following a sunny picnic lunch on the beautiful lawn of the Agricultural Experiment Station, members journeyed north to Sleeping Giant State Park in Mt. Carmel for a splendid afternoon hike up the "head" and "chin" of the Giant, led by four experienced members of the Sleeping Giant Park Association.

FALL CANOE TRIP ON HOUSATONIC

We have reserved 20 canoes in the northwest corner of Connecticut for our annual canoe trip. This year we will paddle the white waters of the Housatonic River from Falls Village to Cornwall Bridge—not very strenuous, but still fast moving water. You should have some experience paddling a canoe. We will meet on Saturday, October 1, at 10:00 a.m. at the power plant in Falls Village. You can either bring your own canoe or reserve one of our canoes for \$25.

Here's what to do:

1. Please give us a call if you plan to come.
2. No charge for those bringing their own canoe.
3. If you reserve a rental canoe, please send us your \$25 check by September 16.
4. If you cancel by September 26, you'll receive a refund.
5. We'll send you a map.

Please bring lunch and drink. We'll provide transportation back to Falls Village around 4 p.m.

Benton Hill Fen

FIRST CRITICAL AREA PUT UNDER OPTION

The Trustees and staff are pleased to announce that in June the Chapter secured an option to purchase 30 acres at Benton Hill Fen in Sharon, the first option signed under the new 25-site Connecticut Critical Areas Program.

Benton Hill Fen is a large, open calcareous wetland which supports several plant communities and a variety of wildlife. At least five plants found there are listed as rare, threatened, or endangered in Connecticut. These are *Carex crawei* and *sterilis* (sedges), *Salix serotima* (autumn willow), *Scirpus pendulus* (bulrush), and *Salix candida* (hoary willow). In Connecticut, few preserved examples exist of calcareous wetlands, and Benton Hill is one of the best we have identified.

The fen was under threat of wide-scale development that would have seriously altered its ecological integrity. The owner had applied for approval to



subdivide his 41 acres into 11 separate house lots. Under the terms of the Conservancy's option, he retains 11 acres only and is restricted to building no more than three new dwellings. Said Executive Director Ken Olson,

"While it would have been ideal from an ecological standpoint to preserve all the acreage, the Conservancy has done the next best thing—protected the integrity of the wetland by limiting development." Olson also credits the excellent efforts of the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) for its cooperation in this project. HVA executive Randy Lemmon monitored the subdivision proceedings and remained in close communication with TNC.

The Trustees have established a fundraising goal of \$150,000 to cover acquisition costs and establish a stewardship fund to manage the fen in perpetuity. At this writing, we have identified at least \$50,000

and are searching for additional leadership gifts. To help pay for the project, the Conservancy must sell a house lot on part of the property that can withstand limited development and will restrict additional acreage by conservation easement.

The Chapter is interested also in protecting land north and south of the area now under option. Discussions with landowners are underway and we are confident that we will soon receive, as gifts, conservation easements on approximately 40 acres.

Six months into the option period, the Trustees will review the fundraising. If the Chapter can show enough cash or pledges toward the \$150,000 goal, we will exercise the option. As is the custom in capital fundraisers, we seek gifts in five or six figures from those able to give them. Simultaneously we ask that those able to contribute in lesser amounts please continue to support our other critical need, the operating budget, which enables us to continue negotiations for land at Benton Hill Fen and for other critical areas in Connecticut.

TWO TNC PRESERVES PROPOSED AS NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARKS

A recently completed study commissioned by the Department of the Interior recommended a total of 144 areas in the New England-Adirondack region for possible designation as National Natural Landmarks. Twenty areas in Connecticut are recommended. Among them are two Conservancy preserves: Pattagansett Marshes in Niantic and Griswold Point in Old Lyme.

William A. Niering, Katharine Blunt, professor of botany at Connecticut College and Director of the Connecticut Arboretum, and Thomas G. Siccama, professor at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, conducted the study with the aid of three graduate students from Yale University.

The study includes an assessment of the geology, vegetation, and fauna of the region and site descriptions of each location. According to Drs. Siccama and Niering, the Department of the Interior will use this study to determine which of the sites are of national significance and warrant recognition.

Two other Conservancy preserves in Connecticut have already been designated as National Natural Landmarks. They are: Beckley Bog in the Frederic C. Walcott Preserve in Norfolk and Cathedral Pines in Cornwall.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "David P. Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

David P. Warren
Critical Areas Director

PERILS OF PAULINE . . .

With the signing of an option on Benton Hill Fen we begin the first land acquisition project under our Chapter's Connecticut Critical Areas Program (ConnCAP).

This happy development brings to mind an aspect of our finances reminiscent of the Perils of Pauline: We are once again starting a large land purchase project without knowing just where all the money is coming from.

Ideally, you'd run a program like ConnCAP first by building a big fund balance—in our case some \$3 million—and then you'd buy the critical natural areas.

In practice, however, real estate deals like ours must be promptly pursued when the opportunity presents itself, which is often unexpected. Suddenly, an owner decides to sell, often to a developer. In such cases our staff must move quickly to get the seller's name on the dotted line, and worry later about raising the money. Of course, our use of the option process assures that we won't really be "stuck" with a purchase contract we can't afford to honor. If we can't raise the money before the option expires, we don't acquire the property.

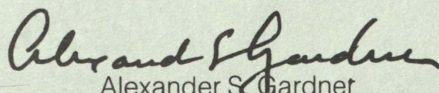
Long Conservancy experience shows that such failed fundraising projects are rare. You, who make up the Conservancy's remarkable group of supporters, come to the fore. Another choice natural area is saved.

Which brings me back to ConnCAP. This major capital program is a two-part endeavor: raising money and buying land. Right now, land acquisition opportunities are falling into place so fast that our staff has not had time to give full attention to fundraising. Soon we will have two, and maybe more, options on outstanding natural areas, meaning that hundreds of thousands of dollars will have to be paid within a year to secure the properties.

If you have been thinking about making a capital gift to ConnCAP, now is the perfect time. You will give our staff the financial "war chest" they need to feel assured in entering into more real estate negotiations. And you will insure the preservation of Benton Hill Fen.

Furthermore, you will relieve your trustees' occasional worries about whether we'll get Pauline off the railroad tracks before the train comes through!

A footnote: As a special capital project, ConnCAP is separate from the ongoing, regular needs of our Chapter for operating funds. If you give to the Chapter through dues, as an Acorn, or in the fall or spring appeals, we don't want you to discontinue or diminish this giving in favor of ConnCAP. We need operating funds to keep our whole organization going. We need ConnCAP funds as special gifts to preserve our state's 25 most critical natural areas. We hope that some of you will be able to help our Chapter in both categories, as so many of you have done in the past.


Alexander S. Gardner
Chairman

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

Information on TNC's Planned Giving Program is now available in the Chapter office. The program familiarizes donors with methods of giving to the Conservancy assets other than cash, methods that offer significant tax and other benefits to donors. For example:

- Outright gifts of real or personal property
- Bequests
- A gift of your home now, retaining the right to live there for the rest of your life
- A gift which will allow you to pass sizable assets to your children or grandchildren completely free of gift and estate tax, or at a greatly reduced tax
- A gift of life insurance policy

We would be happy to consult with you personally and confidentially.

INCREASED CORPORATE SUPPORT

We give special thanks to the following Corporate Associates (annual donors of \$1,000 or more) who in the last two years have increased their support to Chapter operations, helping us keep pace with inflation:

	1981	1983
Aetna Life & Casualty Co.	\$3,000	\$5,000
CIGNA	1,000	2,500
Continental Group	5,000	6,000
Dexter Corporation	1,000	1,250
General Telephone & Electronics	1,000	4,000

The nearly 400 corporations that annually support TNC recognize that the Conservancy employs the techniques of the free enterprise system to preserve areas of critical ecological importance. The Connecticut Chapter is pleased to continue the effective working partnership with its 23 Corporate Associates.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Memorial gifts to the Conservancy are in a very real sense a *living* memorial. In helping us to secure and manage the best remaining examples of our state's flora and fauna, a loved one's memory is forever honored in the beauty and diversity of our natural world. Since spring 1982 (our last published list), gifts have been gratefully received in memory of the following individuals:

Theodore R. Clark	Dr. Samuel Meek
Hugh L. M. Cole	George Parsons Milmine
Sandy Comora	Norman B. Newton
Michael Davis	Mrs. Herbert Pease
Mrs. John O. Devries	Harold Randall
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Mrs. Gladys Kirmas	Peter M. Watkins
Carolyn Wilson Link	F. B. Woodward
Charles F. Lord	Gabrielle Woodward

ADIEU TO MARGE EATON

Marge Eaton, Chapter Secretary for more than three years, has given notice. We are both sad and happy. Sad because Marge is part of a fine group of colleagues. Happy because she leaves to join another helping profession, nursing.



Marge Eaton

Any executive knows the critical role played by a secretary. Marge's work, usually behind the scenes, has contributed enormously to the larger goals of the Conservancy. More personally, I appreciate her skills, her attitude, and her dedication—all abundant, all of such high quality that it will not be easy to replace her. The rest of the staff joins me in saying thanks and wishing Godspeed.

—W. Kent Olson

LAND TRUST SERVICE BUREAU

As the Connecticut Chapter works more concertedly to preserve the critical natural areas in the state, it remains interested in seeing lands of local significance protected. For the past three years, the Chapter and the Conservation Law Foundation of New England have supported the Land Trust Service Bureau (LTSB), a project that advises and assists the 82 independent land trusts in Connecticut. Collectively the trusts hold over 16,000 acres. Under the guidance of Director Suzi Wilkins, the Service Bureau passes along TNC methodology proved effective here and elsewhere across the country. The Chapter is pleased to continue its support of the LTSB and its interest in having the local trusts as "working partners."

This year, the Service Bureau is determining future needs of the trusts and ways of increasing their participation in and support of LTSB. Results from a February questionnaire and input from five regional meetings held in June will help the LTSB shape its work. One need that has surfaced has been a call for a statewide land workshop, to be held on September 10th. "How-to" sessions will teach such skills on acquisition, trail building, mapping, and land management. Please contact the Chapter for further details (344-9867).

A Convocation of Land Trusts

Saturday, September 10, 1983

Yale Inn, Meriden

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sponsored by:

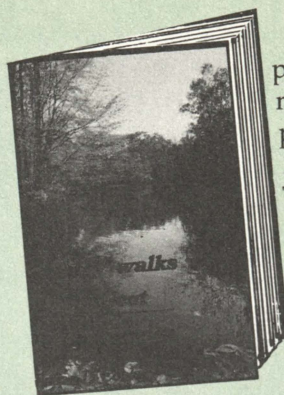
Land Trust Service Bureau

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Conservation Law Foundation

COUNTRY WALKS IN CONNECTICUT A Guide to The Nature Conservancy Preserves

by Susan D. Cooley



photos by George Bellerose
maps by Nora Hennessy Rolston
published by the
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The Nature Conservancy
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